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Crime Haiku in  
*Body of Evidence: A Collection of Killer'ku*

Growing up with a parent-in-law-enforcement, it is safe to say that I have been exposed to a lot of things that most people would have a hard time seeing, hearing, and believing. From a young age I have always had a fascination with law enforcement and what they deal with on a daily basis. I came to realize that it's a lot more than catching bad guys and pulling people over for speeding. It's a whole different mentality these men and woman need to adapt to in order to deal with criminals and their crimes.

This collection, *Body of Evidence: A Collection of Killer'ku*, does a fantastic job with keeping the topic broad and incorporating other factors into crime and not just the crime itself. The editors, kjmunro and Jessica Simon, decided to separate this collection into different subtopics. I personally really enjoyed this organizational strategy. It was very easy to read and follow along with. It would also allow readers to focus on topics they enjoyed more and skipping the ones they personally did not care for. Instead of focusing solely on the action of someone committing a crime, they narrow the sections into what crime is being committed and then the book goes through the procedurals, prison, court, etc. I read through the entire collection twice and these were my top six selections. All of these sections are from different parts of the book and all have different authors from different locations.

m  
i l k  
c a  
r t o  
n e  
m p t  
y f  
a c e

LeRoy Gorman, *Body of Evidence*, 14

What caught my attention initially was the structure of the haiku. It has eight lines total of no words at all, just letters. After reading between the lines, you then make up words within this collection of letters. The final result is "milk carton empty face". Obviously, the structure has to do with the fact that its shaped like a milk carton. The part of the haiku that made me think was "empty face". This to me could mean a variety of things. My initial take on it was that this person on the carton looks like even if they are found they don't seem like they want to be home. A second interpretation was that the face is now "empty" because this picture and date with the picture was from a long time ago and the odds this person is still alive is very slim. Overall, I really enjoyed the format of this haiku and how it was direct enough to let you know what you were looking at but open ended enough for the reader to make their own interpretation on what "empty face" means.

drops of blood  
on the snow  
bloom

Charlotte Hrenchuk, *Body of Evidence*, 31

I set the scene as a cold winter night where it has just freshly snowed but is no longer snowing anymore. The once hectic crime scene is calm now and detectives are collecting evidence. I imagine a rookie detective taking in this intense crime scene for the first time. He is taking in every detail while veteran

detectives follow the same old routine. The rookie puts himself into the victim's shoes and follows the blood trail outside of this suburb home into the snow. The first drops of blood have already settled into the snow. As the rookie continues following the trail, the blood gets brighter and noticeably fresher. He approaches the last few drops of blood in the snow and notices the unique pattern they all possess. the detective examines the last drop in the snow. He is intrigued with how something so brutal resembles a new flower blooming in the spring.

surrounding  
the quiet bungalow  
yellow crime scene tape

Joanne Morcon, Body of Evidence, 39

I really enjoyed the play of the color yellow in this haiku. Initially I was imagining a dark quiet night where there is little to no color because its later at night. Then when you read that surrounding the quiet scene there is yellow crime scene tape you immediately see the bright yellow tape hanging steady around the house. In addition to this I see the reflection of the police cars lights shining off of the bright yellow tape. I just found it so interesting how such a simple haiku with no real story can bring the reader to such a vibrant atmosphere. The mood is calm and controlled so it is not real intense at all. It is just your regular old crime scene you see in the movies.

five dead in a mountain hamlet—  
the murderer leaves  
a haiku

Vicki McCullough, Body of Evidence, 41

This was my favorite haiku in the book. It fulfills all of my favorite characteristics about haiku. First being a vivid location. The author sets the scene right away by putting us in a mountain hamlet. Based off prior knowledge, these tend to be extremely secluded. Odds are that it would take a while for anyone to find the victims are located in this house. A second thing I enjoy is how they set up the timing. You know that the murderer is no longer in the house and has most likely placed or left them there for a reason. Finally, I really enjoy the mystery of the last line. You cannot help but to go over what kinds of things this haiku said. It's almost as if this is a serial killer and they are either playing a game with the police or maybe this person is explaining why these people died in their haiku. The possibilities are endless, and this story can become anything the reader would like to make of it. I also found it interesting how they incorporated the word "haiku" into their own haiku.

his first suit  
provided by the state  
for the murder trial

Kjmunro, Body of Evidence, 50

The first thing I noticed about this was that the author is not from the United States. He is from Canada and for me that explained maybe why this defendant was provided a suit. I personally have not heard of any stories about defendants in America being provided suits for their court dates. Therefore, that is why this haiku stood out to me. After rereading and digging a little deeper into what was said I got a deeper meaning than this being a poor guy's court date. This suit represents all the times he should have had a suit but was never provided one or simply never needed one because the opportunity was never presented. Hearing this is the mans first suit we assume he never got married, didn't come from money, never applied for high jobs, and doesn't have a high education. Another thing we can assume is that he most likely hasn't been in trouble like this before because then he would have already had a suit.

the ventriloquist's dummy  
knows who the murderer is  
but won't say

Yoko's Dogs, Body of Evidence, 51

In my opinion this is a very common thing that law enforcement officers have to go through when it comes to witnesses and victims participating in investigations. In this haiku you have the perpetrator controlling this witness. The murderer has this person so much under his control that he knows there is no way they will tell his name. it is very visible to everyone that this witness is being controlled and manipulated by this person because its almost as if this person is sitting in the investigation room with the strings attached to them. there is a variety of reasons why this person will not talk. It could be because they're related, are being blackmailed, simply dislike the police, were involved, or simply fear for their life if they do tell. I enjoy how open ended this haiku was at the end and how visually descriptive it was in the beginning.

#### Bibliography:

Munro, Katherine, and Jessica Simon. *Body of Evidence: A Collection of Killer'ku*. Catkin, 2017.